

FACT SHEET



**Former Diller Battery Site
Des Moines, Iowa**

May 2000

INTRODUCTION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to oversee Superfund activities at the Former Diller Battery site, 701 Corning Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa. This fact sheet provides an update of site activities.

CURRENT STATUS

The city of Des Moines and the Union Pacific Railroad Company are in the process of preparing an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA), which will be submitted to EPA upon completion. The EE/CA is a document that describes the alternatives for addressing contamination at the site. EPA will evaluate the alternatives presented in the EE/CA and make a recommendation to the public on the alternative that should be implemented to address the contamination. The public will have an opportunity to comment on EPA's recommendation. EPA plans to have a meeting in Des Moines to discuss the recommendation and take comments from the public. The comment period is expected to occur early this summer.

EPA will also take additional sediment and water samples from Riverview Lake, located west of the site, the week of May 15th. The purpose of this sampling is to verify whether site contaminants have impacted the sediment or water in the lake.

An Administrative Record File has been prepared for the site and is available for public review. The Administrative Record File is made up of site-related documents including the Community Involvement Plan. EPA interviewed citizens in the community to identify their concerns about the site. The Community Involvement Plan provides information on EPA's outreach activities to address those concerns. The Administrative Record File can be viewed during normal business hours at the following locations:

North Side Library
3516 5th Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50313

Environmental Protection Agency
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

SITE BACKGROUND

The site is located in a commercial area of north-central Des Moines and is bordered by a residential neighborhood to the north, light industry to the east and south, and Riverview Park Lake to the west. The Diller Battery Company operated a lead-battery factory from 1946 to 1952 on the southernmost part of the site. In 1953, the facility was operated jointly by Diller Battery and Span-O-Life Battery, and by Span-O-Life Battery only in 1954. From 1955 to 1964, the Hunter Manufacturing Company manufactured beds at the site. This part of the site, which includes a small metal storage shed and a concrete pad, was fenced in 1997 by the city of Des Moines. Another part of the site, located northeast of the former Diller Battery Company property at the southwest corner of 6th Avenue and Boston Avenue, was previously the location of a school. The school was demolished in 1994. Fill dirt may have been moved from the Diller Battery property onto the cleared lot.

In 1995, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources collected soil samples at the site after the city of Des Moines notified them of potential contamination. Elevated levels of lead were found in the soil. EPA collected soil samples in June 1996 and found elevated levels of lead and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

In September 1998, the city of Des Moines and the Union Pacific Railroad Company, two of the owners of the site, signed an agreement known as an Administrative Order on Consent, to assess the contamination at the site and identify alternatives to address the contamination. Polk County also agreed to contribute money toward costs associated with the site assessment.

The city of Des Moines and the Union Pacific Railroad took additional soil samples in May 1999 to assess the extent of the contamination. The samples indicate that elevated levels of lead are present within the fenced part of the site where the battery factory was located. Elevated levels of PAHs were found over the entire surface area of the site. The source of the PAHs is unclear.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions about this fact sheet or need additional information regarding this site, please contact:

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